

Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): FY 2016 Community College Initiative Program

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAAS-16-008

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.009

Key Date/Application Deadline: November 16, 2015

Program Description/Executive Summary:

The Office of Global Educational Programs of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) announces an open competition for the FY2016 Community College Initiative (CCI) Program. The CCI Program provides international participants from underserved and underrepresented communities with an intensive academic-year long program at accredited U.S. community colleges, focused on building technical and professional skills while deepening participants' understanding of the United States.

U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) that represent consortia of accredited U.S. community colleges, or that represent other combinations of accredited community college campuses may submit one proposal to cooperate with the Bureau for either Option A or Option B available under this competition. If multiple proposals are received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared ineligible and receive no further consideration in the review process.

In order to maximize the number of participants under this program, it is the Bureau's expectation that institutional and private sector funding and cost sharing will be made available by applicant organizations.

It is the Bureau's intent to award up to three cooperative agreements (one base year plus two non-competitive continuations) for an estimated three-year total amount of \$15,600,000, pending availability of funds. Please see section B.) Award Information, below for additional details.

Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation

Organizations that represent consortia of eight or more community colleges are eligible to apply under “Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation” to administer CCI Program-wide activities and to implement CCI Programs at U.S. campuses. Applicants under Option A must demonstrate the capacity to administer these CCI Program-wide activities: managing the application review and placement cycle; coordinating pre-departure materials and participation in virtual orientations; planning and executing at least one event for all CCI participants; and overseeing the CCI-wide branding and alumni engagement efforts. Applicants under Option A also need to demonstrate the capacity to implement U.S. arrival orientations and pre-academic programs, along with academic year programs at host campuses for approximately 132 participants, contingent on the availability of funds and the number of awards executed.

One cooperative agreement will be awarded under Option A. Applicants under Option A must demonstrate a willingness and ability to work with other organizations under Option B if this option is exercised. In all cases, applicant organizations should demonstrate flexibility and the ability to increase or decrease hosting capacity to accommodate final funding levels.

Option B: CCI Program Implementation Only

Organizations that represent consortia of three or more community colleges are eligible to apply under “Option B: CCI Program Implementation Only” to administer and implement U.S. arrival orientations and pre-academic programs, along with academic year programs at host campuses for approximately 36 students. ECA may award up to two cooperative agreements under Option B, pending the availability of funds.

Organizations that apply under Option B must demonstrate a commitment to work with the institution awarded under Option A for CCI program-wide activities. Applicant organizations should demonstrate flexibility and the ability to increase or decrease hosting capacity to accommodate final funding levels.

A. Program Description:

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

Supplemental funding for this program may be provided from Economic Support Fund (ESF) transfers. ECA reserves the right to modify the composition of final awards and

their funding levels based upon the quality of proposals submitted, the availability of funds, and other factors impacting long-term foreign policy objectives.

Purpose: The Community College Initiative (CCI) Program demonstrates the U.S. commitment to education for all by providing access to educational opportunities to a broad spectrum of international students from underserved and underrepresented communities. By providing quality technical and professional education, community colleges can provide students from developing countries with skills and experiences that will help them to participate constructively in their countries' development. The Bureau is engaged with the U.S. community college sector to increase the number of international students enrolled at U.S. community colleges and to reinforce efforts to build international ties. International students bring opportunities for global engagement and learning to U.S. classrooms and campuses, encouraging U.S. community college students to study abroad and fostering global awareness and skills development for those U.S. students who may not have the opportunity to study or travel abroad.

International students selected for academic-year long study at accredited U.S. community colleges under this program will receive educational opportunities, professional and leadership development, and exposure to U.S. society that will enable them to return home with new skills and experience with which to contribute to the growth and development of their home countries and to mutual understanding between citizens of their home countries and the United States. With improved technical, professional and entrepreneurial skills and a more global perspective, these participants will return to their communities as workforce leaders able to meet important needs in their home countries.

The Bureau anticipates recruiting program participants from countries which may include Brazil, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, South Africa and other countries (subject to change). Currently, CCI participants come from twelve countries and participants are recruited through the Public Affairs Section of the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate, or through the Fulbright Commission if available in the eligible country. The Bureau reserves the right to make changes in eligible countries; proposals should indicate flexibility and willingness to host international students from any country.

The program goals are to:

- 1) Support the U.S. foreign policy goal of youth empowerment, entrepreneurship, and development by equipping exchange participants with professional and technical skills in fields of study that will help them as workforce leaders to meet important needs in their underserved communities;
- 2) Build mutual understanding, tolerance, and respect through sharing cultures and values;
- 3) Empower participants from underrepresented and underserved groups to engage in addressing issues of concern in their local communities upon their return home;
- 4) Foster relationships among underserved youth from different ethnic, religious, and national groups, including U.S. counterparts; and
- 5) Promote internationalization efforts on U.S. community college campuses.

The objectives of the program are for participants to:

- 1) Demonstrate increased knowledge and professional skills in their chosen field of study;
- 2) Demonstrate increased confidence and ability in their personal, professional, and leadership skills;
- 3) Demonstrate a better understanding of community engagement as practiced within their multinational campus cohorts and in their host communities in the United States;
- 4) Demonstrate a better understanding of the society, institutions, and culture of the United States; and
- 5) Demonstrate improvement in their level of proficiency in English.

The objectives of the program are for community colleges to:

- 1) Increase institutional capacity to host international students, especially those from underrepresented communities;
- 2) Increase institutional capacity to facilitate engagement among visiting international students and U.S. students, staff, and faculty to build mutual understanding, tolerance, and respect through sharing cultures and values;
- 3) Internationalize on-campus opportunities for U.S. students to gain international awareness, global competencies and ultimately to increase the global mobility of U.S. community college students.

Applicants are requested to submit a narrative of no more than 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages indicating under which option they are applying and outlining a comprehensive strategy for the administration and/or implementation of the CCI Program. The proposal should identify specific accredited U.S. community colleges to host participants for one academic year in groups of approximately 12-16 students. Colleges with limited international experience should host smaller cohorts.

Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation:

CCI Program-wide Administration:

Application Review and Placements

The proposal should describe in detail a system for receiving all rank-ordered application submissions from U.S. Embassies and Fulbright Commissions abroad; conducting a technical review of applications and ensuring completeness of documentation; conducting a medical review and clearance process for each candidate; distributing complete applications among host institutions to ensure the best program placements for participants' academic and professional goals; and recommending placements to ECA. Final approval of principal and alternate slates of candidates and placements resides with ECA.

The proposal narrative should clearly state the applicant's commitment to consult closely with ECA (and Option B award recipient(s) as needed) in the placement of students in diverse multinational cohorts. Each consortium and campus must have a diverse mix of participants by rank-order, geography, and gender to the extent possible. The Option A consortium will communicate final placements to the Public Affairs Sections of the U.S. Embassies or Fulbright Commissions in the partner countries. No offers of scholarships to participate may be issued without Department of State/ECA clearance.

Pre-departure Support

The proposal should demonstrate plans for developing and disseminating CCI Program-specific pre-departure orientation materials for participants and U.S. Embassies or Fulbright Commissions. The proposal should also describe plans to participate virtually in home country pre-departure orientations (PDOs) and coordinate participation of ECA (and consortia representatives from Option B award recipient(s) as needed) in these orientations. Pre-departure support must be coordinated closely across ECA, U.S. Embassies or Fulbright Commissions, and host consortia/campuses.

Identification of resources for pre-departure distance learning and in-country English language programming are encouraged where appropriate and cost-effective. The proposal should describe creative ideas to connect participants with the State Department's English language resources both in-country and online (<http://www.americanenglish.state.gov/>), as well as with host campus-based resources when available to facilitate language learning prior to arrival. Language learning could include general communication or writing skills or industry-specific vocabulary in proposed fields of study.

CCI-wide Event

The proposal should include planning, budgeting, logistical coordination, and implementation for at least one CCI-wide program event of approximately three-days in duration, to be held in or near Washington, D.C. The event should facilitate participant personal and professional development and help participants to maximize their CCI experience. This event may be at the mid-point of the academic year or at the conclusion of the academic year. The theme of the event will be decided in consultation with ECA.

CCI-wide Alumni Engagement

The applicant organization should demonstrate a commitment to facilitate CCI-wide alumni engagement and propose activities that would amplify host campus efforts and strengthen both the CCI Program brand and the CCI alumni network. All host campuses or consortia should share individual reporting and engagement activities with the Option A recipient to facilitate CCI-wide alumni engagement initiatives.

CCI-wide Branding

Proposals should explain plans to promote CCI-wide branding, and administer CCI websites and social media properties cooperatively with ECA and in compliance with ECA Communication Guidelines.

CCI Program Implementation:

The proposal should explain processes for registering and monitoring participants in SEVIS under the Bureau's sponsorship with a program number to be provided by the Bureau.

U.S. Arrival Orientation and Pre-Academic Program

A U.S. arrival orientation and pre-academic program should be provided for all participants in summer 2016 at each U.S. host institution. Programs should be approximately two to four weeks in duration and applicant organizations should clearly justify the length of time proposed. The pre-academic program provides incoming CCI students with English language study and orientation to U.S. academic culture in order to increase their chances of success in their academic programs. The pre-academic program also aims to facilitate success outside of the classroom by familiarizing participants with expectations for behavior and program participation, the rules and regulations of the host colleges, and the laws of the U.S. communities with a focus on navigating topics such as gender and diversity within the U.S. context. The pre-academic program should also provide CCI students with a basic understanding of current issues in U.S. society and develop an understanding of U.S. social values in order to foster richer intercultural exchange and integration with their host communities.

English language program components should be customized to meet the diverse needs of individual participants whose skills are below the minimum requirement for enrollment in credit-bearing courses. These programs should also address the needs of participants who meet the minimum language requirement, but who would benefit from instruction in academic writing. Proposals should describe English as a Second Language programs and resources, including tutoring, at the participating colleges that would be available to students needing additional language instruction during the academic year in order to be eligible to take classes in their fields of study. Proposals should demonstrate a commitment to measuring change in English language proficiency from arrival to completion of the program and include a plan for conducting such an assessment.

Program components devoted to the acculturation process should include introducing participants to their local communities, familiarizing program participants with U.S. campus facilities and services, and developing skills needed for participants to be successful in the program (i.e., study skills, time management, team building, use of technology, budgeting, and healthy living).

Academic Year Programs

The proposal should indicate the ability to design and offer comprehensive academic-year programs in the selected fields of study that showcase noteworthy host campus academic programs for cohorts of approximately 12-16 students on each host campus; partnerships with local institutions related to the field of study that enrich on-campus learning; and co-curricular, sector-based programming that develops a social, political, economic, and cultural understanding of the local, national, and international contexts of each field. The program should also expose participants to local leaders, experts, and/or

practitioners in the field. Each host campus should plan to offer comprehensive academic year programs in two or three fields of study. Capacity to host in all fields of study should be represented across the consortium.

Participants may apply for, and be placed in, the following fields:

- Agriculture
- Applied Engineering
- Business Management and Administration
- Early Childhood Education
- Information Technology
- Media
- Public Safety
- Tourism and Hospitality Management

ECA reserves the right to add or remove eligible fields of study prior to each recruitment cycle.

The proposal should outline procedures for advising, monitoring and supporting participants in their professional and personal development throughout the year and for evaluating their progress toward program goals.

The proposal should summarize the consortium's overall capacity to host participants in and across all fields while also providing a comprehensive summary of the specific field offerings at each proposed host campus. These summaries will guide the recruitment and placement phases of the program. Individual candidates will apply to participate in specific, targeted, field of study-driven, academic year programs.

ECA will be responsible for providing and distributing initial recruitment and program information during the base-year of the program. In the subsequent two non-competitive continuations and in coordination with ECA, the organization awarded under "Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation" would review, update and distribute application forms and recruitment materials to U.S. Embassies and Fulbright Commissions.

Academic programs should last one academic year and begin in Fall 2016. Programs of study should lead to a certificate or professional qualification in an eligible field of study whenever possible. The proposal should include a summary of certificate options within the proposed time period in each field of study at each campus. It is ECA's intention to include these certificate options and eligibility requirements as part of the application in future iterations so that applicants can indicate which programs they would like to pursue.

Program design should demonstrate the ability to offer tracks in each field of study for participants with various levels of proficiency in English. For example, program design should include one track for participants who meet English-language proficiency requirements of the host campus for full-time, credit-bearing study and a second track for

those whose level of proficiency in English does not meet host institution requirements for credit-bearing study but for whom alternative full-time programming will be provided. Proposals should explain language requirements for certificate eligibility.

Programs should also include unpaid internships, service-learning opportunities, and co-curricular programming that facilitate hands-on, practical application of the theoretical, classroom-based learning. Proposals should describe plans to facilitate this type of programming in each field of study at each host campus. For example, proposals from a campus that would host in the field of information technology would provide examples of potential local IT internships and service-learning opportunities as well as programming that exposes participants to local IT leaders, experts, and/or practitioners in that field who can enrich participants' understanding of the social, political, economic, or cultural issues of IT in the local, national, or international contexts.

The proposal should explain how participants will engage in enrichment activities, and should include creative ideas for exposing participants broadly throughout the academic year to U.S. institutions, society, and culture. For example, these activities may include participant presentations about their country or culture to college classes, local schools and community groups; participation in community-based programs or activities; and attendance at educational and/or cultural events with a U.S. focus, providing international knowledge and perspectives to their host communities as well.

The proposal must include a program component that matches participants with U.S. friendship families, mentors, or peers to facilitate the development of personal friendships and exposure to U.S. culture. Proposals should also include purposeful programming that connects CCI participants with efforts on host campuses to enhance study abroad awareness and participation in international study among U.S. students. Participants should also have opportunities to share their cultures with the people that they meet.

Campus Resources

The proposal should describe campus resources and partnerships that participants would be introduced to during the orientation program and referred to throughout the program year for on-going support (i.e., academic advising, study centers, language and writing labs, health or counseling services, student organizations, internship or career services, student services, and international student services).

Participant Reporting and Branding

The proposal should demonstrate a commitment to sharing and publicizing program events, participant highlights, and alumni news with ECA and program stakeholders through the development of a media/communications plan. Proposals should explain plans to administer CCI Program websites and social media properties as determined in partnership with ECA and in compliance with ECA Communication Guidelines. If applicable, Option A and B award recipients should coordinate to ensure consistent reporting and branding across the CCI Program.

Alumni Engagement and Reporting

Proposals should provide a purposeful plan with an anticipated timeline for continued follow-on activity with alumni (primarily without Bureau support), such as tracking and maintaining a database of all CCI alumni resulting from the award and facilitating follow-up activities that may include listservs and social media. Host campus and consortia reporting and engagement activities should be shared with the Option A award recipient to facilitate CCI-wide alumni engagement initiatives.

Option B: CCI Program Implementation Only:

CCI Program Implementation

Organizations that apply under Option B must demonstrate a commitment to work with the institution awarded under Option A on CCI Program-wide activities such as placements, pre-departure orientations and materials, participation in the CCI-wide event, alumni reporting and engagement, and CCI-wide branding.

The proposal should explain processes for registering and monitoring participants in SEVIS under the Bureau's sponsorship with a program number to be provided by the Bureau.

U.S. Arrival Orientation and Pre-Academic Program

A U.S. arrival orientation and pre-academic program should be provided for all participants in summer 2016 at each U.S. host institution. Programs should be approximately two to four weeks in duration and applicant organizations should clearly justify the length of time proposed. The pre-academic program provides incoming CCI students with English language study and orientation to U.S. academic culture in order to increase their chances of success in their academic programs. The pre-academic program also aims to facilitate success outside of the classroom by familiarizing participants with expectations for behavior and program participation, the rules and regulations of the host colleges, and the laws of the U.S. communities with a focus on navigating topics such as gender and diversity within the U.S. context. The pre-academic program should also provide CCI students with a basic understanding of current issues in U.S. society and develop an understanding of U.S. social values in order to foster richer intercultural exchange and integration with their host communities.

English language program components should be customized to meet the diverse needs of individual participants whose skills are below the minimum requirement for enrollment in credit-bearing courses. These programs should also address the needs of participants who meet the minimum language requirement, but who would benefit from instruction in academic writing. Proposals should describe English as a Second Language programs and resources, including tutoring, at the participating colleges that would be available to students needing additional language instruction during the academic year in order to be eligible to take classes in their fields of study. Proposals should demonstrate a commitment to measuring change in English language proficiency from arrival to completion of the program and include a plan for conducting such an assessment.

Program components devoted to the acculturation process should include introducing participants to their local communities, familiarizing program participants with U.S. campus facilities and services, and developing skills needed for participants to be successful in the program (i.e., study skills, time management, team building, use of technology, budgeting, and healthy living).

Academic Year Programs

The proposal should indicate the ability to design and offer comprehensive academic-year programs in the selected fields of study that showcase noteworthy host campus academic programs for cohorts of approximately 12-16 students on each host campus; partnerships with local institutions related to the field of study that enrich on-campus learning; and co-curricular, sector-based programming that develops a social, political, economic, and cultural understanding of the local, national, and international contexts of each field. The program should also expose participants to local leaders, experts, and/or practitioners in the field. Each host campus should plan to offer comprehensive academic year programs in two or three fields of study. All fields of study should be represented across the consortium.

Participants may apply for, and be placed in, the following fields:

- Agriculture
- Applied Engineering
- Business Management and Administration
- Early Childhood Education
- Information Technology
- Media
- Public Safety
- Tourism and Hospitality Management

ECA reserves the right to add or remove eligible fields of study prior to each recruitment cycle.

The proposal should outline procedures for advising, monitoring and supporting participants in their professional and personal development throughout the year and for evaluating their progress toward program goals.

The proposal should summarize the consortium's overall capacity to host participants in and across all fields while also providing a comprehensive summary of the specific field offerings at each proposed host campus. These summaries will guide the recruitment and placement phases of the program. Individual candidates will apply to participate in specific, targeted, field of study-driven, academic year programs.

ECA will be responsible for providing and distributing initial recruitment and program information during the base-year of the program. In the subsequent two non-competitive continuations and in coordination with ECA, the organization awarded under "Option A:

CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation” would review, update and distribute application forms and recruitment materials to U.S. Embassies and Fulbright Commissions.

Academic programs should last one academic year and begin in Fall 2016. Programs of study should lead to a certificate or professional qualification in an eligible field of study whenever possible. The proposal should include a summary of certificate options within the proposed time period in each field of study at each campus. It is ECA’s intention to include these certificate options and eligibility requirements as part of the application in future iterations so that applicants can indicate which programs they would like to pursue.

Program design should demonstrate the ability to offer tracks in each field of study for participants with various levels of proficiency in English. For example, program design should include one track for participants who meet English-language proficiency requirements of the host campus for full-time, credit-bearing study and a second track for those whose level of proficiency in English does not meet host institution requirements for credit-bearing study but for whom alternative full-time programming will be provided. Proposals should explain language requirements for certificate eligibility.

Programs should also include unpaid internships, service-learning opportunities, and co-curricular programming that facilitate hands-on, practical application of the theoretical, classroom-based learning. Proposals should describe plans to facilitate this type of programming in each field of study at each host campus. For example, proposals from a campus that would host in the field of information technology would provide examples of potential local IT internships and service-learning opportunities as well as programming that exposes participants to local IT leaders, experts, and/or practitioners in that field who can enrich participants’ understanding of the social, political, economic, or cultural issues of IT in the local, national, or international contexts.

The proposal should explain how participants will engage in enrichment activities, and should include creative ideas for exposing participants broadly throughout the academic year to U.S. institutions, society, and culture. For example, these activities may include participant presentations about their country or culture to college classes, local schools and community groups; participation in community-based programs or activities; and attendance at educational and/or cultural events with a U.S. focus, providing international knowledge and perspectives to their host communities as well.

The proposal must include a program component that matches participants with U.S. friendship families, mentors, or peers to facilitate the development of personal friendships and exposure to U.S. culture. Proposals should also include purposeful programming that connects CCI participants with efforts on host campuses to enhance study abroad awareness and participation in international study among U.S. students. Participants should also have opportunities to share their cultures with the people that they meet.

Campus Resources

The proposal should describe campus resources and partnerships that participants would be introduced to during the orientation program and referred to throughout the program year for on-going support (i.e., academic advising, study centers, language and writing labs, health or counseling services, student organizations, internship or career services, student services, and international student services).

Participant Reporting and Branding

The proposal should demonstrate a commitment to sharing and publicizing program events, participant highlights, and alumni news with ECA and program stakeholders through the development of a media/communications plan. Proposals should explain plans to administer CCI Program websites and social media properties as determined in partnership with ECA and in compliance with ECA Communication Guidelines. Option A and B recipients should coordinate to ensure consistent reporting and branding across the CCI Program.

Alumni Engagement and Reporting

Proposals should provide a purposeful plan with an anticipated timeline for continued follow-on activity with alumni (primarily without Bureau support), such as tracking and maintaining a database of all CCI alumni resulting from the award and facilitating follow-up activities that may include listservs and social media. Host campus and consortia reporting and engagement activities should be shared with the Option A recipient to facilitate CCI-wide alumni engagement initiatives.

Institutional Capacity:

All proposals should demonstrate depth of experience in conducting and administering complex and multi-faceted international education programs. An applicant organization, on behalf of the whole consortium, should demonstrate the organization's interest in and capacity to host participants from any country in all specified fields. A proposal should reflect the applicant organization's institutional capacity and the range of fields in which the proposed host colleges have expertise.

Program and administrative costs for this program are described in detail in the POGI. All budgets should provide funding for program costs, which includes round-trip international travel for all participants, pre-academic programs (with intensive English language training and campus familiarization and college success sessions), tuition, books, and living costs. The proposal should also include administrative costs and explain processes for providing maintenance, book, local transportation, and other allowances to participating students and for paying tuition fees directly to host colleges.

Programs and projects must conform with the requirements and guidelines outlined in the Solicitation Package, which includes the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI).

In a cooperative agreement, ECA/A/S/U is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. These activities and the roles and responsibilities of the Department and your organization are outlined in the attached POGI.

Proposal narratives should include a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional non-competitive continuations (formerly referred to as option years), pending successful performance and the availability of funds. The narrative should focus on details specific to the implementation of the base year program, with the understanding that the program design, duration and participant numbers would be similar when/if the subsequent two non-competitive continuations are exercised. ECA will perform an annual performance evaluation/review to determine if a non-competitive continuation will be exercised. Satisfactory performance and the availability of funds is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all non-competitive continuations.

B. Federal Award Information:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement

ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under A. Program Description above.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2016 – base year \$5,200,000; FY 2017 –non-competitive continuation year one (formerly referred to as option year one) \$5,200,000; FY 2018 – non-competitive continuation year two (formerly referred to as option year two) \$5,200,000, **pending successful performance and the availability of funds.**

Approximate Total Funding: \$15,600,000. **This figure represents base year plus two Non-Competitive Continuation years, pending successful performance and the availability of funds.**

Approximate Number of Awards: Pending the review and approval of successful proposals, the Bureau intends to make approximately one to three awards under this competition.

Floor of Award Range: The Bureau anticipates that the minimum award available will be approximately \$1,400,000.

Ceiling of Award Range: Up to \$5,200,000

Approximate Average Award: ECA reserves the right to modify the composition of final awards and their funding levels based upon the quality of the proposals submitted, the availability of funds, and other factors impacting long-term foreign policy objectives. The maximum award available will be approximately \$5,200,000 for the base year. Awards for each non-competitive continuation year will be approximately \$5,200,000, **pending successful performance and the availability of funds.**

Anticipated Award Date: Pending the availability of funds, February 1, 2016.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: December 31, 2020. **This date reflects the anticipated duration of the award – one base year plus two non-competitive continuation years.**

Additional Information:

A Cooperative agreement(s) will be awarded for a period of 17 months (base year) with Non-Competitive Continuations (formerly referred to as option years) for two additional 18-month periods (non-competitive continuations one and two). *ECA will notify the recipient of our intention to exercise or not to exercise a Non-Competitive Continuation at least 90 days in advance of expiration of the current year after an internal evaluation of the recipient's performance. The decision to exercise a Non-Competitive Continuation will depend both on the satisfactory performance of the recipient and the availability of funds.*

C.) Eligibility Information:

C.1. Eligible applicants: Applications may be submitted by U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3).

C.2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, the Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's Circular 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

C.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:

a.) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making one to three awards, in an amount up to \$5,200,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition.

b.) Technical Eligibility: All proposals must comply with the following requirements or they will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process.

- Proposals requesting funding for infrastructure development activities, sometimes referred to as “bricks and mortar support,” are NOT eligible for consideration under this competition and will be declared technically ineligible and will receive no further consideration in the review process.
- Eligible applicants may not submit more than one proposal in this competition.

If more than one proposal is received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared technically ineligible and will receive no further consideration in the review process. **Please note:** Applicant organizations are defined by their legal name, and EIN number as stated on their completed SF-424 and additional supporting documentation outlined in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document.

D.) Application and Submission Information:

Note: Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

D.1 Contact Information to Request an Application Package:

Please contact LaRita Hagar, HagarL@state.gov, 202-632-9458 or Emily Spencer, SpencerEW@state.gov, 202-632-6329, the Office of Global Educational Programs, ECA/A/S/U, SA-5, 4th floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, fax 202-632-6489, to request a Solicitation Package.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document which consists of required application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. The Solicitation Package also contains the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document, which provides specific information, award criteria and budget instructions tailored to this competition.

Please specify LaRita Hagar and Emily Spencer and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number located at the top of this announcement on all inquiries and correspondence.

D.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet:

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at <http://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding> or from the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Please read all information before downloading.

D.2a. Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application should be submitted per the instructions under D.3p. “Application Deadline and Method of Submission” section below.

D.3a. You are required to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a UEI number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a UEI number, access <http://www.dnb.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your UEI (DUNS) number is included in the appropriate box of the SF – 424 which is part of the formal application package.

D.3b. All proposals must contain an executive summary, proposal narrative and budget.

Please Refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document and the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document for additional formatting and technical requirements.

D.3c. All federal award applicants must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) database in order to submit a proposal in response to an open competition on Grants.gov.

All federal award recipients must maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in www.SAM.gov until all program and financial activity and reporting have been completed. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. Failure to register in SAM will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

D.3d. You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

- 1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.
- 2) Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

D.3e. In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and

Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

D.3f. If your organization is a private nonprofit which has not received a grant or cooperative agreement from ECA in the past three years, or if your organization received nonprofit status from the IRS within the past four years, you must submit the necessary documentation to verify nonprofit status as directed in the PSI document. Failure to do so will cause your proposal to be declared technically ineligible.

D.3g. **All ECA awards recipient organizations** must be registered with GrantSolutions by accessing www.GrantSolutions.gov. To register as a first time user of GrantSolutions, please scroll to the bottom of the home page and click "Getting Started-Request a User Account" at <http://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/home/customer-support/getting-started/>. Organizations that have previously used GrantSolutions do not need to register again. If the organization is not able to access the system, please contact GrantSolutions.gov Help Desk for help in gaining access.

Support for Grantee Organizations is available from 8 AM – 6 PM EST, Monday – Friday and can be reached at help@grantsolutions.gov or 1-866-577-0771.

Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative:

D.3h. ADHERENCE TO ALL REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE J VISA

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The award recipient(s) will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://j1visa.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
SA-44, Suite 668
301 4th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20547

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

D.3i. Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of political, social and cultural life in the United States and abroad. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will enhance the program's goals and objectives and the participants' exchange experience. Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support of Diversity' section of this document as well as the DIVERSITY, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY section in the "Proposal Submission Instructions" document for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal.

Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," the Bureau "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106 - 113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

D.3j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation

Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that your proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The Bureau expects that the recipient organization will track participants or partners and be able to respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the program, learning as a result of the program, changes in behavior as a result of the program, and effects of the program on institutions (institutions in which participants work or partner institutions). The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a program. Your evaluation plan should include a description of your project's objectives, your anticipated project outcomes, and how and when you intend to measure these outcomes (performance indicators). The more that outcomes are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You should also show how your project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this NOFO.

Your monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs are products and services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output information is important to show the scope or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. Outcomes, in contrast, represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured as an extent of change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

1. We encourage you to assess the following four levels of outcomes or impacts, as they relate to the program goals set out in the NOFO (listed here in increasing order of importance): **Participant satisfaction** with the program and exchange experience.
2. **Participant learning**, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.
3. **Participant behavior**, concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between participants, community members, and others.
4. **Institutional changes**, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements.

Please note: Consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of data collection for each level of outcome. For example, satisfaction is usually captured as a short-term outcome, whereas behavior and institutional changes are normally considered longer-term outcomes.

Overall, the quality of your monitoring and evaluation plan will be judged on how well it 1) specifies intended outcomes; 2) gives clear descriptions of how each outcome will be measured; 3) identifies when particular outcomes will be measured; and 4) provides a clear description of the data collection strategies for each outcome (i.e., surveys, interviews, or focus groups). (Please note that evaluation plans that deal only with the first level of outcomes [satisfaction] will be deemed less competitive under the present evaluation criteria.)

Recipient organizations will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

D.3k. Virtual Exchange Component: ECA welcomes innovative ideas on how organizations can leverage appropriate mobile and/or online technologies to maintain engagement among exchange participants, encourage project collaboration and widen participation in the overall project to a broader audience. ECA strongly encourages organizations submitting proposals in response to this solicitation to suggest one or more

virtual exchange components to complement the in-person exchange. The virtual exchange component(s) could come before, during and/or after the physical exchange. The objective for the virtual exchange component(s), defined as technology-enabled, sustainable, people-to-people, cross-cultural exchanges, is to augment the impact of the in-person exchange described in this solicitation. ECA encourages organizations to propose virtual exchange ideas that take advantage of ECA's existing web and social networking platforms, including our International Exchange Alumni space. Virtual exchange components would be coordinated with and approved by the ECA program office and U.S. missions abroad on a project by project basis.

D.3l. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients: All ECA Grant Recipients must adhere to the requirements in ECA's Communications Guidance on the creation of program branding and attribution, websites, social media, and press.

D.3m. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget:

D.3n. Applicants must submit SF-424A – “Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs” along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification.

For competitions that will be renewed through a Non-Competitive Continuation (formerly referred to as Option Years) applicants must submit:

- the SF-424A which must include the budget request amount for the base-year of the program;
- a detailed proposal narrative and budget for the base year of funding (Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instruction Document (PSI) for general budget guidance.). The narrative should also include a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional non-competitive continuation years, pending successful program performance and availability of funds; and
- an abbreviated/estimated summary budget presenting the total projected administrative and program costs for the anticipated total duration of programming (base year, plus two non-competitive continuation years).

To exercise the Non-Competitive Continuation (formerly referred to as Option Years) mechanism the recipient will be required to submit:

1. timely quarterly performance and financial reports;
2. a request in writing to ECA at least 90 days in advance of the expiration of the current program year;
3. a summary budget that projects program expenses through the end of the current year;
4. a detailed budget outlining both administrative and program expenses for the requested non-competitive continuation year; and
5. a brief narrative to support the continuation of the award.

The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will:

- 1.) closely monitor the recipient's performance through site visits, desk audits, mandatory quarterly performance and financial reports, consultations, and other forms of communication and dialogue before exercising additional non-competitive continuations. (Additional details regarding monitoring and oversight of the program by ECA representatives will be provided at the time the base-year award is made.)
- 2.) review and evaluate all mandatory quarterly program and financial reports;
 - All program and financial reporting requirements must be current and up-to-date before the Bureau will exercise additional non-competitive continuations.
 - Any/all concerns, issues, or modifications requested by the Grants Officer or Program Officer to the original program design or method of implementation must be responded to in writing.
 - The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will review and advise of ECA's approval or disapproval of the response before issuing subsequent non-competitive continuations.
- 3.) Prior Grants Officer approval is required to carry forward an unobligated balance from a prior funding period to the subsequent funding period. If the Grants Officer determines that some or all of the unobligated funds are not necessary to perform the program activity, the Grants Officer may decline the Recipient's request to carry forward the unobligated balance.

The Grants Officer may, at their discretion, use the unobligated balance to reduce or offset future funding for a subsequent funding period. An unobligated balance at the end of a funding period is not sufficient justification to carry forward funds. A final determination and approval to carry forward any funds will be communicated via a cost amendment with adjustment, if any, to new obligation amounts.

- i. The request to carry forward an unobligated balance must include:
 - a. A brief narrative why funds remain unobligated and how the unobligated funds will be used to complete the previously approved goals and objectives of the program; and,
 - b. A detailed budget that reflects the amount of unobligated funds to date, and anticipated expenditures in the subsequent period of performance for all cost categories under the authorized budget.

Allowable costs for the program and additional budget guidance are outlined in detail in the POGI document.

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

D.3p. Application Deadline and Method of Submission:

Application Deadline Date: November 16, 2015

Method of Submission:

Applications may only be submitted electronically through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the "Find" portion of the system.

PLEASE NOTE: ECA bears no responsibility for applicant timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via Grants.gov.

Please follow the instructions available in the 'Get Started' portion of the site (<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>).

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov registration process could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this NOFO to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov.

Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "For Applicants" section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on federal holidays

Email: support@grants.gov

Applicants have until midnight (12:00 a.m.), Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. There are no

exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after midnight of the application deadline date will be automatically rejected by the Grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

Please refer to the Grants.gov website, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation. Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from Grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Again, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal to ensure that proposals have been received by Grants.gov in their entirety, and ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

D.3q. Applicants may submit only one proposal under this competition. If multiple proposals are received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared ineligible and receive no further consideration in the review process.

D.3r. Intergovernmental Review of Applications: Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas and State Department regional bureaus, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. All awards will be assessed for risk prior to their issuance. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

E.1. REVIEW CRITERIA

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

1. Quality of the program idea and program planning: Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission as well as the objectives of the Community College Initiative Program. Proposals should demonstrate an understanding of issues faced by countries in the developing world as related to the program goals. A detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity for participants placed in field-related clusters. Proposals should be clearly and accurately written, substantive, and with sufficient detail. The program agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.

2. Ability to achieve program objectives: Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the Community College Initiative Program's objectives and plan and should address each program component.

3. Multiplier effect/impact: Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of individual linkages. The proposed strategy should maximize the Program's potential to maintain community college links with Program alumni.

4. Support of Diversity: Proposals should show substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will be achieved in the different aspects of program administration and of program design, content and implementation, including individual grantee/participant recruitment, selection and placement. It is important that proposals have a clearly articulated diversity plan and not simply express general support for the concept of diversity.

5. Institutional Capacity and Track Record: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. Proposals should describe the applicant's knowledge of, or prior experience with, international students and visitors, and the applicant's experience in educating students in the targeted subject fields, including information about certificate programs in subject fields. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs involving the hosting of international students and visitors, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants or cooperative agreements. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

6. Follow-on Activities: Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events. Activities should include tracking and maintaining updated lists of all alumni and facilitating follow-up activities with alumni, including electronic listservs.

7. Project Evaluation: Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success in meeting program objectives, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. Award-receiving organizations/institutions will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

8. Cost-effectiveness and Cost-sharing: The applicant should demonstrate efficient use of Bureau funds. The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. The applicant should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

F.) Federal Award Administration Information

F.1. Award Notices:

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and transmitted to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition.

F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following: Office of Management and Budget's Circular 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Effective December 26, 2014, replacing the previous circulars).

For a copy of the OMB circular cited, please contact the U.S. Government Publishing Office or download from the www.ecfr.gov website.

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants>.

<https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/pages/home.aspx>

F.3. Reporting Requirements: You must provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following required reports:

Mandatory:

- 1.) Additional performance reports shall not be required more frequently than quarterly or, less frequently than annually. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the grant year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). The first page of the Performance Progress Report form (SF-PPR) must be submitted with all programmatic reports and can be found here: http://aopefa.a.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=20&menu_id=68. The complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a *Grant Note* under the corresponding record for this Agreement in GrantSolutions.gov. For assistance, please contact the GrantSolutions Help Desk at 1 (866) 577-0771 (toll free for US callers) or by email at help@grantsolutions.gov. The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/>. Once a financial report has been approved by the Department, the Recipient must upload the approved report to [GrantSolutions.gov](http://www.dpm.psc.gov/), in the same manner specified for the programmatic reports. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Agreements.
- 2.) A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet must be submitted with all program performance reports.
- 3.) A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award;
- 4.) A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This report should be e-mailed to: FFATAECA@state.gov. This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USAspending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.
- 5.) Because the Competition will allow for the exercise of Non-Competitive Continuations (NCC) (formerly referred to as Option Years), applicants must be placed on a mandatory quarterly program and financial reporting cycle. The due dates for these reports will be included in the final assistance award document. The program and financial reports must demonstrate substantial progress by addressing progress towards the original approved goals and objectives, relative activities and events, and supporting fiscal data. The reports will be reviewed by both the assigned Grant Officer and Program Officer.
- 6.) Quarterly reports would address significant activities of the period and planning actions completed for activities anticipated in the next period.

The following describes quarterly-specific topics to be covered in each quarterly report.

An interim program report submitted by **July 31** should contain the following information:

- a) A summary description of the recruitment, application review, and placement process of nominated candidates;
- b) A summary report on the distribution of pre-departure orientation materials to candidates and a copy of all materials distributed;
- c) A summary of pre-arrival data collection efforts and a copy of all distributed surveys;
- d) A summary report on English-language proficiency of participants upon arrival and placement tests given to CCI participants; and
- e) A description of the housing arrangement at each host campus.

An interim program report submitted by **October 31** should contain the following information:

- 1.) A list of all participants, including full name, ID code, college of placement, city and state of placement, congressional district of placement, country of origin, field of study, and gender;
- 2.) An overview of the arrival orientation, including the final program schedule and copies of key materials distributed;
- 3.) A summary of host campus placement information, including host institution contact information, emergency contact information, program start and end dates, and physical addresses for all participants;
- 4.) A description by college of the academic program in each field of study and the certificate programs that CCI participants are eligible to pursue; and
- 5.) A detailed report on English language training programs, including list of participants and providers and a summary of participants' evaluations; and
A description of the proposed host family program at each host campus, as applicable.

An interim program report submitted by **January 31** should contain the following information:

- 1.) A summary report on participants' overall adjustment to the U.S. during the first semester with specific highlights of case study examples, as applicable, and a description of overall programmatic support that facilitates adjustment and responds to challenges;
- 2.) A detailed report on CCI programming designed to share U.S. culture and society with program participants and encourage participants to share information about their home country cultures with citizens of the U.S.;

- 3.) A description of the students' community service projects;
- 4.) A summary report on students' overall academic progress and progress toward earning a certificate in their field of study; and
- 5.) A detailed plan for the full-cohort program including agenda and planned evaluation methods.

An interim program report submitted by **April 30** should contain the following information:

- 1.) A detailed report on the full-cohort program, including the final program schedule, key materials, and a summary of the participants' evaluations;
- 2.) A report on students' internships;
- 3.) A summary report on students' overall academic progress and progress toward earning a certificate in their field of study; and
- 4.) Summary information about student adjustment during the second semester.

A final report containing:

- 1.) A year-end summary of key developments, achievements, and outcomes;
- 2.) A summary report on English-language proficiency changes as a result of participating in this program. Include a description, by college, of the pre-program and post-program English language assessment tools and how program assesses changes in English-language proficiency;
- 3.) An update on all alumni activities undertaken through this cooperative agreement; and
- 4.) Programmatic lessons learned.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to D. Application and Submission Instructions above for Program Monitoring and Evaluation information.

All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

F.4. Program Data Requirements:

Award recipients will be required to maintain specific data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with the Bureau as required. At a minimum, the data must include the following:

- 1) Name, address, contact information and biographic sketch of all persons who travel internationally on funds provided by the agreement or who benefit from the award funding but do not travel.
- 2) Itineraries of international and domestic travel, providing dates of travel and cities in

which any exchange experiences take place. Final schedules for in-country and U.S. activities must be received by the ECA Program Officer at least three work days prior to the official opening of the activity.

G. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: LaRita Hagar, HagarL@state.gov, 202-632-9458 or Emily Spencer, SpencerEW@state.gov, 202-632-6329, U.S. Department of State, Office of Global Educational Programs, ECA/A/S/U, SA-5, 4th floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this NOFO should reference the title and funding opportunity number listed at the top of this solicitation.

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

H. Other Information:**Notice:**

The terms and conditions published in this NOFO are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section F3. Reporting Requirements above.

Evan Ryan
Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

September 15, 2015

